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C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000966

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV, EB/ESC/ESP
COMMERCE FOR ITA JEAN KELLY
TREASURY FOR OASIA JEFF NEIL
USPACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/11/2013
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ETRD](#) [BM](#) [NLD](#)
SUBJECT: LOCAL NLD PUBLICLY SUPPORTS SANCTIONS

REF: A. RANGOON 950
[B.](#) RANGOON 949
[C.](#) RANGOON 921
[D.](#) RANGOON 889

Classified By: COM CARMEN MARTINEZ FOR REASONS 1.5 (B,D)

[¶1.](#) (C) We received a letter dated July 29, addressed to President Bush and signed by sixteen rank and file Rangoon Division members of the National League for Democracy (NLD). A translation of the letter and a copy of the original has been pouched to EAP/BCLTV.

[¶2.](#) (C) The letter offered thanks to the President, the Congress, and the Senate for "keeping a conscientious watch over the democratic forces of Burma..." and expressed wholehearted support for the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act and the Executive Order. The letter also promised that the signatories would "join hands in democratic activities not only for Burma, but also for the world."

[¶3.](#) (C) This seemingly independent and brave move by local NLD members to show their support for the sanctions reflects the general support for sanctions expressed to us by most average Burmese. Most educated Burmese, not involved in business, with whom we spoke have agreed that this government cannot understand anything but pressure, and that a certain amount of pain is acceptable in the pursuit of democratic change. Even businesspeople facing the full brunt of economic sanctions privately accede that the SPDC is fully to blame for the country's economic and political mess and they can understand the U.S. policy to take strong action. The beleaguered merchants add, though, that they sincerely hope the U.S. policy objectives can soon be attained before too much damage is done to the economy and Burmese workers.
Martinez